Program Resources and Utilization of Training in Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment Programs

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Abstract

Research Questions

What is the relationship between training exposure/ utilization and staff perceptions of program resources (including physical resources, staff attributes, and a supportive program climate)?

What is the relationship between training exposure/ utilization and financial measures of program operations (including costs, revenues, and availability of counseling resources)?

Methods

The sample included 63 outpatient drug-free programs that participated in a larger Treatment Costs and Organizational Monitoring (TCOM) project. Programs completed the TCOM, an Initial Program Assessment (IPA), and the Survey of Organizational Functioning (SOF), a superset of the Organizational Readiness for Change (ORC) survey that also included measures of job attributes and workplace practices in addition to training exposure and utilization.

Results

Based on correlational and multiple regression analyses, results showed that training exposure was related to program cost variables and selected perceived resources, staff attributes, and program climate. Training utilization was not significantly related to cost variables but was consistently associated with perceived resources, staff attributes, and program climate.

Correlations of Training Exposure with Perceived Resources

- Training exposure was significantly associated with a variety of measures of physical resources, staff attributes, and program climate. Specifically, staff reported higher levels of using interventions or techniques learned in training when program resources such as office space, internet access, professional growth, and a positive program climate were present.

- Higher levels of training exposure were associated with smaller client census, fewer total professional counseling hours, and higher costs per group counseling hour per client.

Conclusion

The results of this study support the stages of implementation process shown in the Innovation Implementation Framework by showing that exposure to training and utilization of training materials are differentially influenced. Exposure to training was associated with financial factors and program resources that include valuing professional growth and openness to change. Smaller programs and those that had more financial resources for training were higher in training exposure. This appears that resources may not only play a role in adoption as the Innovation Implementation Framework suggests, but they also play an important role in providing access to training, which can often be expensive. However, resources alone are not sufficient for techniques and innovations learned in training to be utilized by staff. Utilization appeared to be associated with a high level of resources, but with staff that value growth and change and programs with a positive and supportive climate.

These results generally support the Innovation Implementation Framework and demonstrate the importance of both adequate resources and a supportive staff and climate in order for training to occur and for innovations to be implemented. These results also demonstrate the importance of examining program financial and personnel information and how they relate to program functioning.